

2005 Work Plan
Border 2012 Emergency Preparedness and Response Border-wide Workgroup

Name of workgroup

The Border 2012 Emergency Preparedness and Response Border-Wide Workgroup (BWWG). The BWWG is comprised of representatives of Mexico's Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA), the Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil (Protección Civil), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Headquarters, Regions 6 and 9.

Goal(s) & objective(s) (citing specific Border 2012 goals/objectives):

Goal #5: Reduce exposure to chemicals as a result of accidental chemical releases and/or acts of terrorism.

- **Objective 1:** By 2004, a chemical emergency advisory/notification mechanism between Mexico and the United States will be clearly established.
- **Objective 2:** By 2008, all 14 sister cities joint contingency plans will be in place and operating (including exercises), with the establishment of bi-national committees for chemical emergency prevention (or similar border forums).
- **Objective 3:** By 2012, 50% of sister city joint contingency plans will be supplemented with preparedness and prevention related efforts, such as risk and consequence analysis, risk reduction, and counter-terrorism.

Main priorities to reduce the highest public health risks:

The main priorities of the workgroup are to invigorate the Joint Response Team, revise and implement the Joint Contingency Plan (JCP). The JCP will contain updated protocol to ensure that notification of polluting incidents in the border area promptly reaches emergency response officials so that effective mitigation and response actions can be taken. The revised JCP will address issues such as the facilitation of cross border equipment and personnel to support binational preparedness, training, exercises, and response actions.

BWWG Members

US Environmental Protection Agency	
<i>US Co-Chair</i>	Dana Tulis, Co-Chair (US EPA HQ)
	Mark Mjoness
	Beatriz M. Oliveira
US EPA Region 6	
	Ragan Broyles
	Valmichael Leos
US EPA Region 9	
	Daniel Meer
	Kathryn Lawrence
	Lauren Volpini

Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA)

Mexico Co-Chair

Dr. Gerardo Alvarado

Lic. Enrique Ortiz

Lic. José Alvarez Rosas

Secretaria de Gobernación, Coordinación General de Protección Civil

Lic. Carmen Segura, Coordinadora General

Lic. Lourdes Cordero, Directora CENACOM

Major planned activities (including major milestones and schedules) – Plan of Action 2005:

Major planned activities	Milestones	Schedule
Invigorate the Joint Response Team (JRT)	Hold JRT meeting to establish mission, goals, activities, and partnerships.	06/2005
Revise the Joint Contingency Plan (JCP)	Identify changes needed to update plan and start revisions.	01/2005
	Revise Notification Protocol	03/2005 (Draft) 06/2005 (Final)
	1 st JCP Draft	06/2005
	2 nd JCP Draft	10/2005
	Final JCP	03/2006
	Conduct quarterly notification drills.	6/2005, 9/2005, 12/2005
Reinforce de JCP through the support and enhancement of regional, state, and local emergency preparedness and response efforts	EPA headquarters will provide assistance and funding to Regions for pilot projects, research, translations, logistics, and coordination with federal partners at the national level. PROFEPA and Protección Civil will provide assistance to Delegates and State Directors; coordinate with federal partners at the national level, and explore better communication methods.	Ongoing
	Continue working with agencies/organizations/industry groups, identify issues, and facilitate cooperation and collaboration on border issues.	Ongoing

	Coordinate training and exercises (PROFEPA).	Ongoing
	Identify, develop, and distribute necessary guidance materials (i.e., CAMEO, ERG 2004).	Ongoing
	Research insurance coverage of U.S. local and state responders to provide cross border assistance. (EPA) Initiate pilot Cooperative Agreement project to ensure and fund local cross border response actions.	2005/2006
Increase communications and outreach of BWWG activities	Conduct initial and BWWG meetings as needed; regularly exchange information.	1/2005 (initial meeting) 3/2005 (NCM) 4/2005 (prepare for JRT); as needed.
Track border incident notification	Track the number of border incident notifications to NRC and CENACOM per year (if CENACOM becomes part of the group)	12/2005
Personal Protective Equipment	Explore ways of obtaining and providing necessary PPE to Mexican emergency responders in the border area	12/2005

2004 Accomplishments:

Both EPA's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and PROFEPA underwent significant reorganization at the management and staff levels in 2004. The BWWG first met in January 2005 and requested Protección Civil to become a formal BWWG partner. Discussions among the three agencies focused on the role of the BWWG and necessary revisions to the U.S.-Mexican Joint Contingency Plan (JCP). It was agreed that the BWWG would serve as the **Steering Committee** of the Joint Response Team (JRT). Key items to be revised in the JCP are the notification system and adding a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with US Customs/ DHS/Mexico Aduanas to expedite emergency border crossings. It was agreed to hold a Joint Response Team Meeting in mid-2005 involving all partners – local, state, regional and other federal agencies. Development of a work plan and necessary preparations for the National Coordinators Meeting were also completed.

Reimbursement and Insurance Coverage for U.S./Mexico Cross-Border Emergency Response. At the Border 2012 National Coordinator's Meeting in Matamoros, Mexico, December 2003, local emergency responder funding and insurance coverage for cross border responses were identified as a border-wide priority. OEM with the assistance of EPA Region 9 and in

consultation with EPA Region 6, has articulated and researched the issues and is moving towards problem resolution. After identifying appropriate insurance coverage and establishing a pilot phase of this program, the EPA regions would enter into Cooperative Agreements with local border governments to provide emergency response technical assistance on behalf of EPA in Mexico, where there is a potential or actual threat to U.S. human health and the environment. Under the agreements, assistance could be provided when the following conditions are met:

1. Where the U.S. jurisdiction maintains current binational emergency response plans and,
2. Upon the request of the Government of Mexico and under EPA authorization.

The key accomplishment of the BWWG during FY2004 was the development of local, state, regional, and federal relationships through various exercises and training sessions on preparedness and response.

Description of 2005 Activities

1. Revise the notification system between Mexico and the United States

The federal, state, and local notification system needs to be updated with current contact lists and new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The new notification system needs to be tested, exercised, and included in the Sister City plans.

2. Revise the Joint Contingency Plan (JCP)

The revised JCP will include “all hazards” such as radiological, biological and, oil releases; reflect changes in the National Response Plan (and new Mexican response protocols); and ensure coordination with other federal, (Departments of Homeland Security, State, and Transportation), and state and local agencies. PROFEPA has no jurisdiction regarding radiological releases, therefore the Mexican Comisión Nacional de Salvaguardia will be integrated to the group.

3. Research Cross Border Insurance Coverage for State and Local Responders

USEPA will identify insurance coverage options and initiate a pilot program to develop and enter into Cooperative Agreements with selected U.S. local governments. The Cooperative Agreements would authorize local government to purchase insurance for cross border response actions and reimburse them for costs incurred when an incident warranting their assistance presents.

4. Facilitate USEPA and PROFEPA cross border response with US and Mexico Customs via a MOA and SOPs

During exercises and actual incidents, U.S. EPA and PROFEPA responders and their contractors need to cross the border in their vehicles, carrying response related equipment. Currently, there is no protocol to expedite their crossing and protect their vehicle/equipment. The BWWG will work with U.S. and Mexican Customs (Aduana) to facilitate an official Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

5. Hold Initial and follow-up BWWG Meetings

Initial BWWG meetings have been held; new group members updated each other on programs and priorities, exchanged information and discussed opportunities for coordination. In addition to meeting at the NCM in March, the BWWG will meet in April/May in order to plan for a Joint Response Team Meeting in June/July. The JRT will include all local, state, regional and federal emergency response partners and will be held in the San Diego/Tijuana area.

6. Personal Protective and Response Equipment

Mexican counterparts are in urgent need of safety equipment to effectively respond to a polluting event in the border area. The BWWG will explore ways of obtaining and providing necessary personal protective and response equipment.

7. Training for Mexican Emergency Responders

Provide training for Mexican Emergency Responders by US specialists through a binational program.

LONG TERM PLANNING

- 1) Review and exercise the notification system and ensure that the NRC and Mexico's CENACOM are prepared to handle bilingual incident communications.
- 2) Work with U.S. and Mexico Customs headquarters to recognize Sister City Plans and expedite local and state cross border preparedness and response activities.
- 3) Initiate formal discussions with the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to coordinate preparedness and disaster response to incidents in Mexico.
- 4) Identify and develop Spanish language reference and training materials.